Nasu language

Nasu (Naisu, Eastern Yi), or Nasu proper, is a Loloish language spoken by a quarter million Yi people of China. Nasu proper and Wusa Nasu are two of six Yi languages recognized by the government of China. Unlike most written Yi languages, Nasu proper uses the Pollard (Miao) script. A distinct form of the Yi script was traditionally used for Wusa, though few can still read it.

Nasu	
Eastern Yi	
Native to	China
Ethnicity	Nasu (Yi)
Native speakers	1.0 million (2007)[1]

Language family	Sino-Tibetan
	• Lolo-Burmese
	  • Loloish
	   • Nisoish
	    • Northern Loloish
	     • Nasoid
	      • **Nasu**

Writing system	Pollard script, Yi script
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	Variously: ywq – Nasu (Wulu) ygp – Gepo (Köpu) yig – Wusa Nasu ywu – Wumeng Nasu
Glottolog	wudi1238 (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/wudi1238) Wuding-Luquan Yi = Wulu[2] gepo1234 (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/gepo1234) Gepo[3] nesu1235 (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/nesu1235) Nesu = Wusa–Wumeng[4]

Contents

Names

According to the *Guizhou Ethnic Gazetteer* (2002),[5] Yi autonyms include Nasu 哪苏,[6] Tusu 兔苏,[7] Lagou 腊勾,[8] Guo 果,[9] and so forth.

Most of Yi people of the Luquan area do not have the autonym Luoluo and Nasu (transliterated into Chinese as 纳苏) means "black", hence the Black Yi (黑彝 Hei Yi),[10] though Black Yi is an aristocratic caste distinction among the Yi People, and Black Yi Script (Heiyiwen) was a Latin script for Yi introduced by missionaries.[11]

Classification

Chen (1985)

Chen, et al. (1985:108) recognizes 3 major varieties of *Eastern Yi* (i.e., Nasu) that are spoken in Yunnan and Guizhou provinces, namely *Dianqian* 滇黔 (Yunnan-Guizhou), *Pan* 盘县 (Pan County of Guizhou), and *Diandongbei* 滇东北 (Northeastern Yunnan).[12] Autonyms include *no ˥su ˥* (alternatively *nɤ ˥su ˩*), *na ˧su ˧ pʰo ˥* (including *na ˧so ˧ pʰo ˥*, *nɤ ˥su ˧ pʰu ˥*, and *ni ˥su ˧ pʰu ˥*), *nɒ ˥ pʰo ˥*, and *ko ˧ pʰo ˥*.

- **Dianqian 滇黔次方言**: 4 dialects

  - **Shuixi 水西土语**: spoken in Bijie, Qianxi, Dafang, Zhijin, Nayong, Qingzhen, and Zhenxiong counties
  - **Wusa 乌撒土语** (ISO 639 *yig* (https://www.ethnologue.com/language/zyg)): spoken in Weining, Shuicheng, Hezhang, Nayong, Yiliang, Huize, and Xuanwei counties
  - **Mangbu 芒部土语**: spoken in Zhenxiong and Hezhang counties
  - **Wumeng 乌蒙土语** (ISO 639 *ywu* (https://www.ethnologue.com/language/zyg)): spoken in Zhaotong and Yongshan counties

- **Pan 盘县次方言**: spoken in Xingren, Pu'an, Qinglong, Shuicheng, Fuyuan, and Luoping counties

- **Diandongbei 滇东北次方言**: 5 dialects

  - **Luquan 武禄土语**: spoken in Wuding, Luquan, Yuanmou, Xundian, Lufeng, and Huize counties
  - **Qiaowu 巧武土语** (*Qiaojia-Wuding*): spoken in Qiaojia, Wuding, Luquan, Yuanmou, and Huize counties
  - **Wuding 武定土语**: spoken in Wuding, Yongren, and Lufeng counties
  - **Xundian 寻甸土语**: spoken in Xundian, Luquan, Huize, Songming, Luxi, Shizong, Luoping, and Mile counties
  - **Kun'an 昆安土语** (*Kunming-Anning*): spoken in Anning and Lufeng counties

Huang (1993)

In his description of the Yi script (not the spoken language) Huáng Jiànmíng (1993) holds that the Nasu variety of Yi script is used by the groups speaking languages of the Nasu language cluster of Northern Yi in south-eastern Sìchuān, eastern Yúnnán, Gùizhōu, as well as in Guǎngxī.[13] He distinguishes two sub-groups. Nasu proper used in Wuding, Luquan and the suburbs of Kunming, and Wusa used in Guizhou and the bordering areas of Eastern Yunnan.

Bradley (1997)

David Bradley (1997) distinguishes three main dialects of Nasu:

- **Southeastern** (Panxian): 150,000 speakers in southwestern Guizhou
- **Northeastern** (Nesu): 300,000 speakers, comprising most of the other Nasu speakers of Guizhou, and some in extreme northeastern Yunnan and southeastern Sichuan

  - Shuixi subdialect 水西土语
  - Wusa subdialect 乌撒土语
  - Mangbu subdialect 芒部土语

- Wumeng subdialect 乌蒙土语
- **Western** (Nasu proper): 250,000 speakers all in north-central Yunnan; Black (more numerous) and Red subdialects

Lama (2012)

Lama (2012) determined that Nasu (Western) is more closely related to Gepo than it is to the others:

- **Nesu**
  - Panxian (Nasepho, *na ˧su ˧pʰo ˧*): North and South dialects
  - Shuixi Nesu (Dafang Nesu)
  - Nesu proper
    - Wumeng
    - Mangbu
    - Wusa (Wusa Nasu)
- Nasu
  - **Nasu** proper
  - **Gepo** (*ko ˧pʰu ˧*): 100,000 speakers

Chen (2010)

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1. Nasu (Wulu) (https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/ywq/) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015) Gepo (Köpu) (https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/ygp/) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015) Wusa Nasu (https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/yig/) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015) Wumeng Nasu (https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/ywu/) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)
2. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Wuding-Luquan Yi" (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/wudi1238). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
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6. http://asiaharvest.org/wp-content/themes/asia/docs/people-groups/China/chinaPeoples/N/NasuWusa.pdf
7. http://asiaharvest.org/wp-content/themes/asia/docs/people-groups/China/chinaPeoples/T/Tushu.pdf
8. http://asiaharvest.org/wp-content/themes/asia/docs/people-groups/China/chinaPeoples/L/Lagou.pdf

9. http://asiaharvest.org/wp-content/themes/asia/docs/people-groups/China/chinaPeoples/G/Guopu.pdf

10. *Anthology of Yi Cultural Research* [*彝族文化研究文集*]. Kunming: Yunnan Nationalities Publishing House (1988). p. 100. "西一带的彝族,仍有自称为'罗罗'。同时，男人自称'罗颇'，女人自称'罗摩'。前述流行《四方八虎"图的滇东北武定、禄劝一带大多数彝族，虽己没有"罗罗》之自称,而从彝族尚黑崇虎的传统中，咯虎取黑以自称'纳苏'为'黑人'或'黑族' (彝语'纳"义为黑、大、深…"

11. Huang Xinxian [黄新宪] *Christian Education and Chinese Social Change* [*基督教教育与中国社会变迁*] Fujian Education Publishing [福建教育出版社] (1996). ISBN 9787533422738. p. 173 "... 这对民族区域的社会变迁具有十分积极的意义。首先，提高了少数民族地区的总体文化水平。据 1951 年对滇北武定区的调查表明，聚居于各县山谷中的苗族 9 / 10 能看能写外国传教士用拉丁字母拼写的苗文；分布在山谷中的黑彝和傈僳族，凡参加基甘教者都懂传教士用拉丁字母拼写的黑彝文和栗栗文。"

12. Chen Shilin [陈士林], et al. 1985. *Yiyu jianzhi* [彝语简志]. Beijing: Ethnic Publishing House [民族出版社].

13. Nathan Hill Medieval Tibeto-Burman Languages IV 2012- Page 450 "The Nasu variety is used by the groups speaking languages of the Nasu language cluster of Northern Yi in the south-eastern part of Sìchuān, the eastern part of Yúnnán, Gùizhōu, as well as in Guǎngxī. Huáng Jiànmíng (1993: 152)"

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External links

- 283-word wordlist in Wuding Maojie Naisu dialect (https://scholarspace.manoa.hawaii.edu/handle/10125/33459) available from Kaipuleohone as well as word lists from other Nasu speakers (https://scholarspace.manoa.hawaii.edu/handle/10125/33422)